

Magic Mystery Show

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Summary: Simba and Nala sneak off to the jungle to explore. They'll wish they hadn't when they encounter Hago...

***Chapter 1*: Chapter 1: Sneaking Off**

AN: Story time! Here we are, the next story in my neatly-presented saga about Simba and Nala's friendship. Enjoying it so far? I hope so.

Magic Mystery Show

Chapter One: Sneaking Off

Hago was by no means any normal lion. He was *far* more than that.

Powerful. Strong. *Evil*. Three words that summed Hago up perfectly. He'd been born into a family that possessed certain powers unheard of by other lions. They knew magic.

Yes, Hago's family knew everything there was to know about magic. Spells, enchantments, curses. A variety of mystical things that most would find absurd.

Unfortunately, Hago didn't possess the magical abilities of his parents, or his siblings. He was the runt of the litter. The black sheep. The outcast. Never paid any attention to, never acknowledged, and thought of as a complete and utter failure.

But Hago sure showed them. You didn't have to have magic in your blood. There were other... methods of using magic.

Hago was given a staff, a strange-looking thing. A metal staff with its head in the shape of that of a cobra. This was what gave Hago his magical abilities.

Using it, he killed his family - save for his brother, who he was on good terms with - in a vicious attack with his powers, reducing them to nothingness. That was their punishment for mistreating him throughout his cubhood.

Now he was unstoppable. His powers granted him the ability to do things which no other lion could. He could control people, kill them, change them. His powers knew no boundaries.

Hago had always dreamed of finding a suitable place to live out the remainder of his life, and after months of searching, he knew he had found just the place.

Pride Rock.

Nala knew what to expect when she woke up. After two weeks of living in the Pride Lands, she found it was like her little routine.

She knew she'd find Simba asleep, and she knew she'd have to wake him up. Then, they would spend all day running around and having fun. Then Nala would go back home, and go to sleep.

And she loved it.

It couldn't get much better for a cub like her. She had everything she wanted. Fun, excitement, adventure - she'd found it all here. That was what you got when you made friends with the most mischievous cub of them all.

Getting to her feet, she smiled when she saw Simba fast asleep a few feet away from her. No different from usual, then. She bounded over to him, and was about to wake him up when she was unexpectedly pounced on by him and pinned down, shocking her.

"Aha!" Simba exclaimed, grinning. "I bet you didn't expect that."

Nala smiled back at him. "You're right, I didn't know what to expect. Since you're such a vampire when it comes to sleep I expected you to wait for me to wake you up."

"So admit it: I *can* pin you."

"Not exactly," Nala said, spotting Simba's tail. She pulled on it, causing Simba to shriek and fall backwards onto the ground. "I know all your weak spots."

Simba frowned. "One day I'll get you."

"You've been saying that for the past two weeks, and guess what? Nothing's changed," she told him.

Simba then had a wide smile on his face. "Guess what we're doing today?"

"What?" Nala asked. "Getting into trouble? Like... Every other day?"

"It wasn't my fault we got so dirty yesterday," he said, shrugging. "Mud pools are fun."

Nala nodded in approval. "Hmm... Good point. So, what do you have planned?"

"I hear there's a jungle outside the Pride Lands," he explained. "It sounds *really* cool. Let's check it out!"

"*Outside* the Pride Lands?" exclaimed Nala. "But we've *never* been that far, Simba. Someone will catch us for sure!"

"Not if we're sneaky." He gestured around the den. "Everyone's sleeping. No one will notice if we're gone for an hour or two."

"An hour or two?" said Nala. "When was the last time I heard that? Oh yes, that time when you wanted to try and climb that huge cliff to see what was up there. But then it turned out it took us *five* hours to climb it, and then *another* five hours to get back down. It was nearly the next morning by the time we got back home."

"Well, we just got carried away that time," he said. "This won't take too long. We'll just look around for a while, and then come back. Besides, what's the worst that can happen? It's only a jungle."

"Well, we don't know what's out there," she said, looking suddenly nervous. "What if there's things out there that eat us?"

"Eat us?" Simba laughed. "We're lions, Nala. No one eats us. We eat everyone else. Nothing to worry about. Now come on, we'd better get out of here before someone finds out."

And with that, the two cubs silently made their way out of the den, hoping that no one would wake up.

Lucky for them, no one did.

"We're nearly there," said Simba, as he and Nala exited a crevasse, having left the enormous gorge in the Pride Lands.

"You said that ten minutes ago," Nala commented. "You're beginning to sound like my mother when I first arrived here."

"Don't worry about it, I'm sure we'll—" Simba stopped midsentence when he came to what seemed like the edge of a cliff. Simba peered downwards over the edge, and he discovered that it wasn't a cliff at all. It was just a really steep hill. The incredible height made him feel a bit dizzy, and he staggered backwards over to Nala.

"Well?" she said.

"You first," he replied, pointing to the steep hill.

Nala peered over the edge, and once she saw the steep hill leading to the bottom she shook her head. "No way. You go first."

"Why? You're not scared, are you?"

"Well, I don't see why *you* don't go first. I think you're the one who's scared," she accused.

Simba looked shocked. "That's not what I meant. I just wanted to... observe the way you... roll down hills."

Nala stared at him, an unconvinced look on her face. "Nice try, Simba. Come on - We'll never see the jungle otherwise. And all this walking will have been for nothing."

Simba looked at the steep hill, and gulped. Maybe it wasn't too late to turn back...

***Chapter 2*: Chapter 2: Hilltop Terror**

Chapter Two: Hilltop Terror

"All right, I'll go. But only if you go with me," Simba told Nala.

"Fine," she agreed. "At least then if something goes wrong I'm taking you with me."

"You're awfully cheery about this, aren't you?" he said sarcastically. "And why would you want to take me with you if something goes wrong?"

"Because I wouldn't want you to miss me," she replied honestly.

Simba couldn't help but smile back. "Good point."

The two of them walked to the edge, and stared down at the steep hill. "That's pretty big," said Nala.

"You can say that again," agreed Simba. "Hey, I've got an idea."

"What?"

"Get on top of me," he replied, as he lay on his back.

"Excuse me?"

"Just do it."

"Okay," she said, positioning herself on top of Simba. Simba wrapped his paws around her back, and Nala did the same.

"Comfy?" he asked.

"Nice cuddle," she joked. "What exactly is your plan?"

"Well, if you hold onto me, and I hold onto you, we can both roll down the hill without getting hurt."

Nala nodded. "That could work."

"It'll work," he said confidently. "Am I ever wrong?"

"Well—"

"Don't answer that," he interrupted. "Ready?"

"No."

"Good. Let's go!" He exclaimed, before he rolled himself and Nala off the edge, and they were sent tumbling down the steep hill.

After a few uneasy seconds of bumping up and down, they realised that this didn't seem dangerous at all. It was actually quite fun!

After a few more seconds, they started laughing loudly, enjoying the trip all the way to the bottom. Simba's little method had worked out well.

They rolled a few more times before coming to a halt at the very bottom of the hill. They were laughing and breathing heavily, still clinging on to each other, without either of them really knowing it.

"Not so scary, now, huh?" said Simba.

Nala laughed. "Nah. That was fun!"

"What did I tell you? I knew we'd be okay in the end."

"I guess so," Nala agreed.

After a few moments, the two realised they were still clinging on to each other tightly. Chuckling nervously, they let go of

each other and quickly got to their feet. That was a bit too close for comfort. Not that either of them minded, but they would *never* tell each other that.

Simba peered out into the distance, and couldn't really see much but the dry, dusty land. It seemed to stretch out for miles.

"You ever been this way before?" Simba asked.

Nala shook her head. "We came a different way to this. Why?"

Simba shrugged. "Just checking. I think it might take more than an hour or two, though."

"And why I am not surprised?"

"Relax. You're with me, remember?"

"That's why I'm worried," she joked.

Simba started walking across the dry flatlands. It sure was hot today. He was looking forward to the shade he'd receive when he got to the jungle.

"You coming?" he called to Nala.

Nala followed after him, joining him by his side. "Of course I'm coming. Someone needs to look after you."

"I don't need anyone to look after me," he told her.

"I know a few people who would argue with that," she teased.

Hago wasn't that far from the Pride Lands. He currently resided in the jungle, his base of operations for the time being.

The stories, the myths, the legends. Hago had heard it all. The kingdom of the Pride Lands was the most respected kingdom in all the land. The Great Kings of the Past had made sure of that.

Hago knew he could take over the kingdom. It wasn't too hard to figure out. He could think of several ways to make himself the King. He could force the King to step down, threaten him, or even - and he thought this was one of the best ideas - murder him.

It would be too easy. Kill the King and rule over for the rest of his life. Simple. The ultimate takeover plan. No one would dare mess with him! And on the rare occasion that they did, they would pay for it with their lives.

He'd been pushed around too much in his life. It was about time he got *his* turn.

He just needed a way to get into the pride. A bargaining chip, something that would guarantee the King would give himself up to Hago.

What he needed was a hostage.

"This was a bad idea," Nala told Simba as they walked across the deserted flatlands. They had been walking for quite some time now, and the heat was beginning to get to them. They felt like they were slowly melting into the ground.

"It wasn't a bad idea," said Simba. "We'll be there soon."

"I bet there isn't even anything interesting in the jungle," she said. "What if it's all just trees and stuff?"

"You'll do anything to try and get back home, won't you?"

"Wait and see," was her reply.

Simba smiled. She wasn't going back home anytime soon. Simba knew his best friend too well. He knew she'd end up enjoying herself by the end of the day, like she always did.

Simba looked ahead, and smiled when he could make out a vague outline of the jungle in the distance. "See? Told ya."

"You love being right, don't you?" Nala asked.

Simba grinned. "Duh!"

She smiled and walked ahead of him. "Come on. Let's go see what's so fun about the jungle. I just hope it's worth the trouble we'll get into when we get back."

"Maybe we won't get in trouble at all," he said hopefully.

"I doubt it. It's taken us about an hour to get this far. Then we'll be looking around this jungle, which will take another few hours, and then that's another hour to get back home. We didn't tell anyone where we were going, so for all they know we could be lying dead somewhere."

"Let's just lie and say we were captured by some hungry hyenas," he suggested.

"You tried that excuse last week. Didn't work."

"Fine. This time I'll say they were *very* hungry."

AN: Another psychopathic villain? As if Scar wasn't already enough. Don't forget to review, or if you happen to be reading this in a mirror for some reason, then weiver.

***Chapter 3*: Chapter 3: Jewel of the Macaw**

AN: Ready for more? If you're here you must be.

Chapter Three: Jewel of the Macaw

Hago sat waiting underneath an ancient tree, trying to escape the sweltering heat. He was never exactly a fan of rain or sun. He wondered why the world couldn't just have one neutral temperature that satisfied every creature who inhabited it.

He wished he had the power to alter certain things like that. Unfortunately for him, he had nowhere near that kind of almighty power that only gods possessed.

His patience was wearing thin. He was waiting for someone to arrive. A so-called 'associate' of his. Forty-five minutes he had been waiting. And anyone who had ever has some kind of association with Hago knew that he didn't like to be kept waiting...

It was five more minutes before Hago's minion arrived. A bulky, unsuspecting lion with brown eyes and a slick black mane. Nothing seemed out of the ordinary about him, which was why Hago needed him.

"Ah..." said Hago, smiling at the lion. "Kitu. Did you get it?"

Kitu hesitated for a moment before he answered Hago's question. The answer wasn't what Hago was expecting.

"No," he forced out, causing Hago to frown.

"No?" said Hago, not sounding overly angry. "Good."

Kitu's eyes widened in surprise. Good? He didn't expect such an answer from a person like Hago. He was expecting more of a furious reaction from him.

"Um... Pardon my asking, but why exactly is that good?" Kitu asked.

"I didn't exactly need you to retrieve the Jewel," came the reply. "I just needed to know where it was. If you did manage to somehow get it then it would just be a bonus. So... Where was it?"

"The Cave of the Wamesahau," Kitu answered.

Hago stroked his chin with his paw thoughtfully. "Just as I expected."

"I tried to get in, but the cave was filled with all sorts of traps. It's crazy in there," Kitu told him.

Hago turned his head to the side, so he was looking away from Kitu. "I suppose I'll have to use other measures to retrieve the Jewel."

"You never told me..." began Kitu. "... What do you need the Jewel for?"

Hago looked back at Kitu. "My dear boy, you must have been living under a rock for several years. Any explorer or Outsider knows about the Jewel of the Macaw. Legend has it that there was once a source of great, almighty power absorbed by a feisty little blue macaw, who ruled over a mighty kingdom of macaws for quite some time. And before she died, the power left her suddenly, taking the form of a jewel, which has remained hidden for years and years. The legend says that only the Pure of Heart will find it. And if I were to absorb that power using my excellent staff..."

Hago held up his metal cobra staff to illustrate his point.

"... Then I would achieve all-powerful glory and majesty! The universe would be mine to command, to control!"

"So what does taking over the Pride Lands have to do with this?" Kitu asked.

"The Pride Lands are my primary target. I need to take the great kingdom over. It would be the greatest possible home for a lion such as myself. I could rule over the entire universe from there, safe and comfortable. I would have peace at last."

"And what about me?" Kitu enquired. "What will my reward be?"

Hago chuckled evilly. "You have served your purpose, Kitu. You've found me the location of the Jewel, and for that you will receive your reward."

Hago suddenly pushed the cobra head of the staff into Kitu's face, so he was staring into the cobra's eyes.

"Your *eternal* reward."

The eyes of the cobra on the staff started to glow red, and Kitu found himself unable to look away. After a few seconds, he started convulsing, like he was having some kind of fit.

Hago smiled evilly as Kitu continued to convulse violently, before landing on the ground, a blank expression on his face. Dead.

Hago laughed evilly. "Fool!" he exclaimed. "It's a shame he didn't realise I was going to double-cross him before I overloaded his brain. Oh well. He wouldn't have been much use to anyone anyway."

Hago thought for a few moments, keeping a firm grip on his staff. It was the only thing holding him up, after a previous accident where he fell from an extremely tall tree. He had suffered back problems ever since. But with the Jewel of the Macaw, he could erase his medical problems instantly."

He just needed his hostage, for two simple reasons:

One - To get into the Pride Lands.

Two - To get into the Cave.

But there was still one question plaguing Hago. Just who was the Pure of Heart?

Simba hung onto the vine with his teeth and flipped himself straight into the cold, refreshing river in the middle of the jungle. As soon as the cool water engulfed his body, he felt the boiling heat melt away. Good riddance.

Simba shook himself, and looked over at Nala, who was standing at the river's edge, watching him curiously.

"Ah... That's better..." he said to her. "Aren't you coming in? The water's great!"

She dipped her paw into the river and swished the water around, checking it over. "I'm checking the water first. My mother warned me that there could be all kinds of diseases in rivers like this."

"Diseases?" said Simba curiously. "What kind of diseases?"

"Oh, your tail dropping off, your eyes falling out - that sort of thing," she replied casually.

Simba looked around nervously. "On second thoughts, maybe this river isn't really for me."

He swam over to the edge and climbed out onto dry land, only to see Nala trying hard to suppress the enormous urge to laugh.

"What's so funny?" Simba asked.

At that moment Nala burst out laughing, hitting the ground it was so funny. "I can't believe you actually believed me!"

Simba frowned. "Very funny."

Nala continued to laugh. "Your eyes falling out! Yeah, like that'd ever happen!"

As a smile crept across Simba's face, and he pulled Nala into the river along with him, causing them both to erupt with laughter.

Nala splashed him playfully. "You jerk!"

"It's your fault for saying there were diseases that would make my tail fall off," he told her.

She rolled her eyes in response. "You don't take jokes well, do you?"

"Some joke," he remarked, splashing her.

Nala giggled. "Stop it!"

"Looks like you're enjoying yourself now," Simba observed. "It was worth the risk, huh?"

"Well..." Nala looked around. "It is fun around here. I don't know if it's worth the trouble we'll get into when we get back."

"Oh Nala, stop worrying and have some fun," he told her. "We'll be fine. What could possibly go wrong?"

Chapter 4: Chapter 4: A Tough Choice

Chapter Four: A Tough Choice

Hago growled as he walked - or rather, hobbled - through the jungle, wondering what his next move was to be.

He needed someone to get into the Cave and the Pride Lands. The so-called 'Pure of Heart'. But who was this Pure of Heart? What significance did he have? Where would Hago find him?

Good questions with no answers. It made Hago angry to think that he had come this far only to be stopped at the last hurdle.

This jungle was so empty. So lifeless. So uninhabited. Which was surprising because it was so extraordinarily huge. Where were the people? Where was the life here? Were they all well hidden? Did they not want to be seen?

More questions with no answers. Oh, how it drove Hago mad. Things were going to turn bloody if he didn't find his hostage soon.

Hago angrily brushed aside a bush with his staff, and walked toward the sound of rushing water. He could sense a river was nearby.

Simba shook himself dry when he climbed out of the river, having finished a playful splash fight with Nala. He lay on the ground, a smile fixed on his face.

Nala climbed out and collapsed on top of him, resting her head on his stomach. "That was pretty fun," she said.

"Told ya," he replied.

"So, should we go back yet?" she asked.

Simba looked surprised. "What? No way! We're going to make the most of this. We'll never be able to do anything like this again."

"I suppose you're right, but we'll probably have a search party after us by now."

Hago heard the voices of the two cubs as he got closer to the river. He smiled evilly.

He had found his hostage. Two, in fact. Looks like the wait was worth it, because now he had two cubs to kidnap. Things were looking up for him, at long last!

Brushing aside more branches and bushes, Hago finally reached the river, and could see Simba and Nala laying next to each other, with Nala resting her head on Simba's stomach.

Suffice to say, Hago got the wrong idea.

What a cute couple. How... repulsing, he thought to himself.

Suddenly, Hago recognised the golden-furred cub, and an evil smile formed on his face, before he chuckled evilly.

That must be Prince Simba, he thought. The future King of the Pride Lands. Looks like he's sneaked off with his little girlfriend, no doubt to impress her with his 'bravery'. Hago stroked his chin thoughtfully. Hmm... I wonder if this is destiny? After all, they do say the purest come from the Pride Lands...

Hago now had a plan in his head. He was going to get the Jewel of the Macaw, the Pride Lands, and all the power in the universe! And there was no one who could stop him!

Using his staff for support, he hobbled over to Simba and Nala, before stopping a few feet away from them.

"It's unwise to explore the jungle alone, you know," said Hago to them sinisterly.

Simba and Nala then took notice of Hago, looking him over curiously. He didn't seem like a very friendly character. Their first impression was absolutely right. Hago *wasn't* a very friendly character. In fact, he wasn't friendly at all.

"Who are you?" Simba asked, already wary of this strange new arrival. Simba found himself looking at the strange staff

Hago possessed, looking it up and down. Just what the heck was that for?

Hago smiled evilly, and Simba and Nala could immediately tell this guy wasn't out to make friends.

"Hago," he replied. "And I've come a long way to find you," he told Simba, pointing at him with his staff.

"Me?" said Simba. "What for?"

"Because I need you to find me the greatest treasure in the world, the Jewel of the Macaw."

"Jewel of the who?" asked Simba.

"What is he talking about?" Nala whispered in Simba's ear.

Simba shrugged in response. Hago sighed.

"I hate cubs," he said. "I myself never actually was one. But unfortunately I find myself *forced* to use you to get into the Cave of the Wamesahau."

"What makes you think I'd help?" Simba asked, an angry look forming on his face. He knew this guy was up to no good.

"Because if you don't I'll kill you," he replied threateningly. "You and your little girlfriend."

"Girlfriend?" Simba exclaimed. "She's not my—"

"Enough!" Hago interrupted. "What's your choice? It's do or die, quite literally. What's it to be?"

Hago pointed the staff toward Simba's head. Simba stared at Hago for a few seconds.

"No way," he said firmly, before turning around and walking away. "Come on, Nala. Let's get out of here."

"Good idea," Nala agreed, following after him, both of them desperate to get away from Hago, before he did some real harm to them.

"I'm warning you," Hago said threateningly, "if you walk away now then I'll make you pay for your insolence towards me."

The two cubs continued to walk away. Hago stared at them, anger building up inside of him.

Fine. If Prince Simba wasn't going to agree willingly, then he was going to agree... *unwillingly*.

"You may think you have beaten me," Hago called after them, "but unfortunately for you I have... *other* methods of getting you to agree."

Those chilling words made Simba and Nala turn around to look at Hago. He was pointing his staff, not at Simba, but *Nala*.

"What is he—" Nala suddenly froze midsentence, prompting Simba to look at her, concerned.

"Nala?" he called, waving his paw in front of her face. "You okay?"

Hago was chuckling evilly. "Told you. There's no one else to blame but yourself for this, Simba."

Nala was completely frozen in place, unmoving. She was as still as a stone statue.

"What have you done to her?" Simba demanded angrily.

"Frozen her," Hago answered. "She won't move unless I reverse the spell I have cast upon her."

"Bring her back," Simba demanded.

"I'm afraid I can't do that," Hago said. "Not unless you agree to go into the Cave of the Wamesahau and retrieve the Jewel of the Macaw. So... What's it gonna be?"

AN: Poor Nala, frozen forever unless Simba agrees to help Hago. Here's an equation for you:

READ + REVIEW = HAPPY AUTHOR.

Solved it?

Chapter 5: Chapter 5: Unwilling Agreement

AN: More, more, more. Because I'm so generous.

Chapter Five: Unwilling Agreement

Now Simba had no choice whatsoever. He wasn't ever going to leave Nala. No chance. He had to do this, he had to retrieve the Jewel of the Macaw, whatever that was.

Simba gave one last sad look at Nala, before turning to Hago, who was smiling evilly, knowing he had Simba right where he wanted him. If Simba didn't agree to help him, then he'd eat his staff.

"Fine," Simba told Hago. "I'll help you."

"Smart cub," Hago said.

"Now change Nala back," Simba ordered. "Now."

Hago chuckled. "No way. Do you think I'm stupid? No, you're going to retrieve the Jewel of the Macaw, and *then* I will free your little girlfriend."

"She's not my girlfriend!" Simba snapped, a little too quickly if you asked him. That sounded a little *too* defensive...

"Fine, whatever," said Hago, turning around. "Live in denial. Now, let's go. I want the Jewel by the time the sun sets."

Hago walked away, and it didn't take him more than a few steps to realise Simba wasn't following him. He turned around to see Simba standing in the same spot defiantly.

"Did you not hear me?" asked Hago. "I said come on!"

"If we're leaving, then we're taking Nala with us. I'm not leaving her out here on her own, no matter what you say," Simba told him, fire in his eyes.

Hago was getting tired of this. This cub was so damn awkward! Well, fine! If he wanted to bring her, then he could have her for all he cared!

"Fine!" Hago shouted angrily, walking over to the frozen Nala. He picked her up and placed her on Simba's back, causing him to stumble forward due to the increased weight. "There! Now let's go!" Hago stormed off.

Simba stumbled forward, getting the hang of carrying Nala on his back. He wasn't used to this, and it felt awkward, but he'd rather feel a bit of discomfort than leave Nala on her own. Simba would never forgive himself if anything happened to her...

After a while, he got the hang of it, and managed to walk at his usual pace. Nala stayed frozen, slumped over his back, her eyes still open, a shock of expression on her face.

"I don't know if you can hear me, Nala," Simba whispered to her. "But I'll get you back to normal. I promise."

He wasn't going to let his best friend down. He wasn't.

There wasn't much more to it now, Hago knew so. All he had to do was send Simba into the Cave of the Wamesahau, hope he got past the various obstacles inside, and claim the Jewel of the Macaw. After that, all he had to do was use the cubs to get into the Pride Lands, kill King Mufasa, enslave the other lions and he'd be completely in control, with the powers of the universe concealed in his magical staff.

It would be a happy ending. Well, for him, at least.

After an hour of walking, they finally came to a cave opening. It was dark, and there wasn't anything visible on the inside. No one could tell what horrors might be lurking on the inside...

Simba eased Nala off of his back and gently placed her on the ground. He looked up at the sky through the tall trees. It was the later afternoon now. He wondered how his parents were. They were probably worried out of their minds right now, searching frantically for him.

And for the first time that day, Simba thought that maybe coming here wasn't such a good thing after all.

If he'd listened to Nala and they'd gone back sooner, they wouldn't be stuck in this life-threatening situation right now, being ordered around by a psychotic wizard.

He regretted it. But now he couldn't do anything about it. It was far too late to do anything. You can't change the past.

"Go in," Hago ordered. "Go in and retrieve the Jewel. When you come out, give me the Jewel and I will unfreeze your girlfriend."

Simba didn't even bother to correct Hago this time. He was far too determined to right his mistakes today.

Simba stood there, glaring at the black abyss. He could very well die in there. He had no idea what lurked inside. But he had no choice. He knew he had to go in.

"Well, go on!" Hago urged, pointing at the opening with his staff.

"No," Simba said firmly.

"*What?*" Hago shouted angrily.

"Bring Nala back first," he told Hago.

"And why would I do that?" Hago asked.

"Because I won't go in and get what you want if you don't," he replied.

"Why, you little..." Hago got ready to smack Simba in the head with his staff, but he hesitated.

"I can't do it on my own," Simba admitted. "I need someone with me."

Hago frowned, thinking it over. "Fine," he agreed. "But if you try in any way to escape me, then I will make your death so painful that you'll wish you were never even born."

"Fine by me," Simba said.

Simba had no idea where this sudden bravery had come from. Maybe it was just the adrenalin pumping through him, giving him that instinct to stay strong and - more importantly - *alive*.

Hago sighed, and pointed the head of his staff at Nala. The cobra eyes on it glowed an evil red, and a few seconds later Nala began to move again, looking around confusedly.

"W-What happened?" she stammered, confused.

"Nala, you're okay!" Simba exclaimed, hugging her.

"Huh?" said Nala. "I'm not getting any of this."

"You were frozen," Simba explained to her.

Nala's senses eventually came back to her, and she remembered. "Oh, yeah. Where is that creep who did it?"

Hago cleared his throat behind her, causing Nala to turn around and shriek in surprise when she saw him.

"Are you going in?" Hago asked Simba, his patience wearing *very* thin.

"We gotta go," Simba told Nala.

"Go where?" she asked.

"In there," Simba replied, pointing to the cave opening.

***Chapter 6*: Chapter 6: Traps, Tricks and Treachery**

Chapter Six: Traps, Tricks and Treachery

"In *there*?" exclaimed Nala, staring at the deadly-looking cave. "Why?"

"*He* wants us to get a jewel for him," Simba explained, pointing at Hago.

"Why?" she enquired.

"That's not of your concern," answered Hago. "Now if you don't go in by the time I count to ten I'm going to start ripping off your limbs. One..."

"I think we'd better go," Simba said.

"Two..."

"But, Simba..."

"Nine..."

"Let's go!" Simba abruptly grabbed Nala and together they raced into the cave.

Hago watched them disappeared into the darkness, and then he lay on the ground, looking up at the sky.

Soon it would all be his. He just had to wait.

"We should have never come here," Nala told Simba as they walked through the cave.

They couldn't see anything on the inside. It was pitch black. They couldn't even see each other. Just the black, bleak void of nothingness.

"I know," Simba agreed. "I'm sorry for putting you through this."

"It's not your fault," Nala told him. "How were you supposed to know a psycho with magic powers was going to appear?"

"I should have been more careful," he replied. "This whole idea was stupid."

"Well, we can't do anything about it now," Nala told him.

"You'd better hold on to my tail," Simba told her. "Just in case you get lost."

"Oh... Okay." She reached down and took hold of Simba's tail. "There."

"Where are we even supposed to start looking for this Jewel or whatever it is?" Nala asked.

Simba shrugged in the darkness. "I don't know. I just hope it's really bright so we can see it. I can't see a thing in here."

"Me, neither. I just hope we can find our way back—"

Nala stopped midsentence when she fell down an unseen hole, dragging Simba along with her, thanks to her taking hold of his tail.

They fell down, down, down... into the abyss.

When Simba and Nala awoke, they found themselves staring into each other's eyes, and they discovered their noses were touching.

Nala abruptly pulled away when she realised the awkward position they were in. Simba got to his feet slowly, and looked around.

"Well, we can see," he observed, noticing that the cave was now lit by burning torches on the wall. They illuminated a very long passageway, leading to further areas of the cave.

Nala looked upward. She couldn't see where they had fallen through. It was far too dark for that. "Um, Simba?"

"Yeah?"

"How are we going to get back up?" she asked, a worried look on her face.

Simba looked upward, and saw why Nala looked so worried. They had no idea about the height they had fallen, so how they were going to get back was a complete mystery.

The thing that had broken their fall was a large pile of sand that had been placed on the floor. If that sand wasn't there, then they would be picking up their insides right about now.

"Well, there's only one way we can go now," he said, pointing to the passageway. He started walking, with Nala following him.

"I hope there's another way out," she said. "Otherwise we're going to starve to death. I might even have to eat you," she joked, a smile on her face.

"No way," Simba told her. "I'd eat you before you could eat me."

Nala laughed. "I'd like to see that."

The two cubs reached the end of the passageway, and they found themselves looking up at a stone statue of a bird. A blue macaw, to be exact.

"It's a dead end?" Simba exclaimed.

"What?" said Nala. "You're kidding, right?"

Simba touched the wall and pressed against it. "Oh, no," he said, fear evident in his voice.

"We're gonna die," she said worriedly. "We can't get out. What are we—"

Suddenly, the eyes of the stone statue glowed a bright blue, and a female voice spoke.

"Who disturbs my slumber?" it bellowed.

Simba laughed nervously at the voice, and he cleared his throat. "It is I, Simba," he told it.

The voice paused, as if thinking it over. "Proceed," it finally said. "Touch *nothing* but the Jewel."

Suddenly, the wall slid up, revealing another room. Simba and Nala's mouths dropped open in surprise at the contents of the room.

The entire room was filled with an enormous amount of treasure. An almost ridiculous amount. Gold bars, silver pieces, every kind of valuable item you could possibly imagine. It was all here.

They looked at each other. "Whoa..." they both exclaimed.

Simba walked into the room, careful not to touch any of the treasure, remembering the instructions of the voice. "How did all this get here?"

"It's amazing," Nala said as she joined Simba.

"Now where's that Jewel?" Simba looked around, and at the far end of the room spotted a staircase leading up to a golden table. On top of this table was a tiny blue jewel.

Simba walked past all of the priceless treasure, and made his way up the staircase, and toward the jewel on the golden table. Nala joined him, and together they stared at the tiny jewel, which was insignificant compared to the other great and mighty treasures concealed in the room.

"This is it?" said Nala, an eyebrow raised. "We risked our lives for this tiny thing?"

"Looks like it," Simba agreed.

Nala went to pick the jewel up, but Simba stopped her. "Watch where you put your paw." He pointed at the golden table. "I think this counts as the treasure. We can't touch it."

"Oh."

"I'll do it." Simba carefully picked up the small jewel, avoiding contact with the golden table. He held it up to Nala's face.
"Well, that's it."

The two looked at the Jewel of the Macaw, and suddenly, everything around them seemed to fade away.

"Simba, what's... happening...?"

And before the two cubs knew it, they found themselves outside the cave opening, face to face with Hago.

"Well done," he said. "The Jewel?"

AN: Will Simba hand it over? You'll have to wait and find out, won't you? Reviews might incline me to give you the final chapter sooner...

Chapter 7: Chapter 7: Almighty Power

AN: Will Hago get away with his evil scheme? Read and find out!

Chapter Seven: Almighty Power

Simba held the Jewel of the Macaw up to Hago's face. "Here," said Simba. "Take it."

Hago smiled. "Why, you smart little cub. You actually managed to do it."

Hago snatched the Jewel from Simba, and looked it over, before letting out a big, evil laugh. "It's mine!" he declared. "It's finally all mine! The universe shall kneel before me!"

Simba and Nala looked at each other, confused. What was he talking about?

"And now that I have the Jewel, I can enslave the Pride Lands! They will all cower before me!" Hago laughed evilly again.

"Huh?" Simba said upon hearing this. "What do you mean?"

"You fools!" he exclaimed. "You've inadvertently sealed your own fate! Thanks to you, I now have the power of the entire universe held in my paw. All I have to do is absorb it using my staff, and I will use my newfound power to kill Mufasa, and then take over the kingdom!"

"You can't do that!" Simba argued.

"I think you'll find I can, you stupid cub!" Hago shouted. "What are you going to do about it?"

Simba suddenly snatched the Jewel from Hago, held it in his mouth and ran off. "Run, Nala!"

Nala did as she was told and ran after Simba. She looked behind to see Hago glaring at them furiously.

Now they're dead for sure, Hago thought, before giving chase. He barely managed a few steps before his back argued with him, causing him to drop to the ground in pain, his staff rolling across the ground.

Stupid back, he cursed. *Why am I forever cursed with this ailment?* Hago looked ahead, and could see Simba and Nala disappearing into the distance. Realising he was never going to be able to catch them, he let out a loud roar of defeat, which echoed through the jungle.

Simba and Nala were running as fast as their legs could carry them, and they eventually came to a halt at the river where they first encountered Hago.

"I think we lost him," Nala said, looking around to see if Hago was anywhere near them.

"Good," Simba said. He spat out the Jewel into his paw and looked it over. "I've got this, too."

"What do you want to do with it?" Nala asked.

Simba stared at the Jewel for a few seconds, wondering what to do with it. He remembered what Hago had said. The power of the universe. All that control and power. It would be magnificent.

"You know what he said," Simba told her. "We could control *everything* with this. We could do anything we wanted to. Get people to do whatever we say. They'd worship us!"

Nala was becoming worried. He wasn't seriously contemplating using the Jewel, was he? It was too much power for anyone to have. No one should ever have to use it.

Simba had a wide grin on his face. "And it's... it's... *wrong*."

Simba then threw the Jewel into the river, and watched as it sunk into the water, creating the tiniest of ripples. No one would ever find it down there.

Nala breathed a sigh of relief. "You had me worried for a second, you know. I thought you were actually gonna use that thing."

Simba smiled at her. "Nah," he said. "I'll have enough power when I'm King. I wouldn't need anything like that."

"You don't think he'll ever find it... Do you?" Nala asked, referring to Hago.

Simba shook his head. "I don't think so. No one will ever spot that in the river. We beat him!"

"Yeah," Nala agreed. "We kicked his butt!"

"You bet we did!" There was a moment of silence between the two. Simba put his paw around Nala. "I'm sorry."

"Sorry for what?" Nala asked, not fully understanding.

"For bringing us here," he replied. "We never would have gotten into all this trouble otherwise."

"It doesn't matter," she told him. "At least we had a few laughs."

Simba smiled. "Yeah. Come on, let's go home."

And with that, the two cubs began the long journey home, wondering just how much trouble they were going to get into when they got back...

Hago sat miserably against a decaying, dying tree, clutching his staff tightly. He'd lost the chance to control the universe, and the Pride Lands. All because of those *wretched* cubs.

I'll get you one day, Hago silently vowed. I'll get you, if it's the last thing I do!

Mufasa, Sarabi and Sarafina all gasped when they saw Simba and Nala enter the den. The three of them had been worried sick about the welfare of the two cubs. Were they dead? Had someone taken them? Was it just another one of their classic 'going off without telling anyone' routines?

"Simba!" Mufasa bellowed, storming over to his son to scold him for running off without telling anyone where he was going.

"Nala," Sarafina called angrily, ready to lecture her daughter.

But before either of them could say another word, they noticed Simba and Nala had a few scratch marks on them, and were bleeding lightly.

Sarafina gasped when she saw Nala had been injured. "Nala, what happened?"

Mufasa looked concerned for Simba, too. "Simba, how did that happen?"

"Well... We were kidnapped by these hyenas who wanted to use us as hostages," Simba lied, as fake tears spilled to the ground. "They hurt us."

"It's true, Mom," Nala told her mother, also faking tears. "It was horrible. We barely managed to get out."

"Oh, Nala..." Sarafina hugged her daughter close to her, as Nala continued to fake crying.

Mufasa patted his son's back. "There, there," he said, "it's all right now, Simba."

Simba and Nala then looked at each other, and winked sneakily. What had really happened was that they suffered a few scratches and scrapes climbing back up the enormous hill to get home. They decided that they might as well use these as an excuse to escape getting into trouble.

Sure, it was sneaky, but they figured they deserved some kind of reward for their heroism today. After all, how many lion cubs can say they stopped a wizard lion from taking control of the universe?

The answer: not many.

The End

AN: Did you enjoy that? Let me know with the magic powers of a review. See you soon for the next instalment!

NEXT TIME: Simba and Nala's latest prank on Zazu takes a sinister turn when they think they've killed him.